

**RESTORATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FORMERLY USED DEFENSE SITES (FUDS)
PROJECT FACT SHEET
JUNE 1998**

**HNC REVISION: 2 OCTOBER 1998
TAG REVIEW DATE: 27 OCTOBER 1998**

1. **SITE NAME:** Victorville Precision Bombing Range
(PBR) #15

SITE NUMBER: J09CA068100

LOCATION:

City: Victorville
County: San Bernardino
State: California

PROJECT NUMBER: J09CA068101

CATEGORY: OE

INPR RAC: 4

ASR RAC: 4

TAG RAC: 3

2. **POC'S:**

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3. **SITE DESCRIPTION:** The former PBR #15 consisted of 640 acres located 42 miles east of Victorville, San Bernardino County, California in the south one-half of section 30 and the north one-half of section 31 of T4N, R5E, S.B.B & M. Coordinates for the

site are Latitude 34° 24' and Longitude 116° 30'. The northern and northwest boundaries of the site adjoin a demolition bombing range known as PBR Y, the subject of DERP-FUDS Project Number J09CA069501. The public uses the site for Off-Highway vehicle recreation and camping. The site is owned and managed by the Bureau of Land Management

The site is situated on a dry lake bed between small mountains of the Fry Mountains in the eastern Mojave Desert near Johnson Valley. The site is nearly level with variations in elevation of 24 feet. Elevation above sea level is 2,600 feet. The area is characterized by many gullies and channels leading from the mountain ranges to the playas on the desert floor. The vegetation consists of desert shrubs, annual forbs, and grasses. Rainfall evaporates or is taken up as soil moisture.

The region has an arid desert climate characterized by long hot summers, warm winters, little rainfall, sunshine, and low humidity. In winter, the average daily temperature is 45° F and the average daily minimum is 30° F. The corresponding temperatures for summer are 77° F with a average daily maximum of 97° F. Temperature extremes have been 17° F in 1949 and 116° F in July 1972. Total annual precipitation is five inches.

4. **SITE HISTORY:** In May 1943, the War Department acquired 640.00 acres of Public Domain by transfer from the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) through Public Land Order (PLO) No. 125. The 640 acre site was designated as Victorville Precision Bombing Range (PBR) #15 and used as a practice bombing area by the Army Air Forces based at the former Victorville Air Field.

PBR #15 was one of 23 PBRs and 2 demolition bombing targets used by Victorville Army Air Field (AAF) for bombardier cadet training during WWII. The military improvements on the site consisted of frame butts and appurtenances, fences and gates, and a bombing target located in the center of the site as depicted on the ASR map. The target was composed of asphalt strips five feet wide configured as three concentric circles with radii of 100, 200, and 300 feet. In addition, there were two strips of asphalt which transected the concentric circles at right angles to each other. None of the improvements remain except for some lumber which may have been part of the target. **Practice 100 lb. bombs, M38A2 were utilized at the site; high explosive bombs, including possibly 100 lb., AN-M30 General Purpose, 500 lb., M43, and 2000 lb., AN-M34/GP were used on the adjacent DERP-FUDS site, demolition bombing range PBR Y.**

On 22 June 1945, PBR No. 15 was declared surplus to the War Assets Administration (WAA). The WAA authorized the retransfer of the property to DOI on 22 June 1945 and custody was relinquished by letter on 2 October 1945. Public Land Order No. 422 dated 30 January 1948 partially revoked Public Land Order No. 125, thereby allowing DOI to officially assume custody of the property. The site was cleared of explosive ordnance, and all detachable improvements were removed. The oiled target outlines were allowed to deteriorate by weathering. The property is now maintained by the DOI Bureau of Land Management.

5. PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

AREA A

Size, Acres:	150
Former Use:	Target Area
Present Use:	Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	Confirmed 100 lb practice bomb, M38A2; also, a tail fuze from an HE bomb. Potential High explosive bombs: 100 lb., AN-M30 General Purpose; 500 lb., M43; and 2000 lb., AN-M34/GP

AREA B

Size, Acres:	120
Former Use:	Safety Zone
Present Use:	Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	Potential 100 lb practice bomb, M38A2. High explosive bombs: 100 lb., AN-M30 General Purpose; 500 lb., M43; and 2000 lb., AN-M34/GP.
Type:	

AREA C

Size, Acres:	370.00
Former Use:	Remaining Land
Present Use:	Undeveloped Desert Land—used by Public for recreation and camping
Probable End Use:	Same
Ordnance Presence:	Potential High explosive bombs: 100 lb., AN-M30 General Purpose; 500 lb., M43; and 2000 lb., AN-M34/GP.
Type:	

6. **CURRENT STATUS:** The Archives Search Report (ASR) for Victorville Precision Bombing Range (PBR) #15 was completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Rock Island District, in June 1998.

7. **STRATEGY:**

AREA A: RAC 3;EE/CA

AREA B: RAC 3;EE/CA

AREA C: RAC 3;EE/CA

8. **ISSUES AND CONCERNS:** The Huntsville Center Technical Advisory Group met and discussed this ASR on 27 October 1998 and determined a strategy of RAC 3, EE/CA for the entire site. PBR #15 adjoins demolition bombing range PBR Y, the subject of DERP-FUDS Project Number J09CA069501, which has a confirmed and potential high explosive bomb presence. Addition of a value for explosive bombs in the RAC form for PBR #15 results in a change of the RAC score from 4 to 3.

PBR #15 is surrounded on three sides by lands which have a confirmed or potential explosive bomb presence. PBR Y borders PBR #15 to the north and northwest; the ASR for PBR Y requested that additional acreage be added to that project so that PBR #15 was then bordered on the north, west and east with lands having confirmed or potential presence of explosive bombs. In addition, a tail fuze from an HE bomb was found in Area A of PBR #15.

HNC Safety Comments: Disagrees with the ASR Recommendations and the assigned RAC Scores since the site is adjacent to a demolition bombing range and is, as a result, included in that area which has a confirmed or potential explosive bomb. An updated RAC form is attached which adds a value for explosive bomb; this changes the RAC score from 4 to 3. The response from the ASR Support District disagrees with the HNC Safety Comments, the need for a new RAC form, and a change in the RAC score from 4 to 3. Although this response addresses some peripheral points alluded to in the HNC Safety Comments, it does not change the fact that PBR #15 is adjacent to a demolition bombing range and is surrounded on three sides by land determined to have a confirmed or potential presence for explosive bombs. **RAC score 3 and a strategy of EE/CA apply to Areas A, B, and C of PBR #15.**

Clearances: The Deduidding Report at E-2 of the ASR indicates that a thorough job was done in clearing the site. The report states in detail how seven bombing ranges, including PBR # 6, were deduidded by five laborers and the 9800th TSU-CE Detachment #14, Bomb and Shell Disposal Team during the period 7 July 1947 through 18 October 1947 with the expenditure of 8200 hours of

labor. The area to be searched was surveyed and marked; a Project Engineer and Detachment Sergeant controlled the search crew; a total of 236 tons of scrap on the ranges was determined for removal; immediate target areas were more heavily impacted and a large percentage of the bombs were buried or partially buried necessitating three passes of the crew and considerable excavating; bombs were exploded or completely demolished using a sufficient charge of Composition C-3; and after detonations, the surrounding area was checked to insure that there was total destruction of the OE. The report ended by saying that the land is free from explosive material for the purpose of grazing, mining and/or agricultural purposes.

Site EE/CA: Since PBR #15 and PBR Y border each other, and a confirmed and potential presence for explosive bombs that exists at PBR Y also exists at PBR #15, there should be one EE/CA which includes both sites. This may involve adjusting the records since the RAC score for PBR Y is 2 and that for PBR #15 is 3.

CWM: The ASR does not address presence of Chemical Warfare Materials at the site.

Other Projects: None

Natural Resources: The threatened desert tortoise occurs in the vicinity of the site. An on-site inspection by appropriate State and Federal personnel may be necessary to verify the presence, absence or location of listed species, or natural communities.

Historical Resources: Other than rock arts recorded in the vicinity, no historical/cultural resources are recorded for this site. Any intrusive measures taken at the site will require oversight by the State Historical Preservation Office and/or other like organizations.

9. **SCHEDULE SUMMARY:** EE/CA

10. **FUNDING/BUDGET SUMMARY:** For Official Use Only